Avian Night Sky Exhibition Stories of Mystical Migrations

Featuring artists **Petra Johnita Lommen** and **MaryBeth Garrigan** Landmark Gallery Schmidt Artist Lofts 900 W. Seventh St., St. Paul, MN 55102

June 21-July 5, 2024

Grand Opening 4-8 p.m., June 21







With music by **Jerry Kosak** and poems by **Stephen Wilbers** Visit our companion exhibit at the **National Eagle Center** This PDF brochure is best viewed on your laptop in two-page format using one of the two attached versions.

Here's how.

- 1. Open the **PC** or **Mac** version.
- 2. If it opens in your **browser**, right-click the document **to open it as a PDF.**
- 3. **Poems** should appear on the **left, paintings** on the **right.**
- 4. If poems appear **right rather than left,** open **the other version** and use your **PC or Mac commands** as explained below.

Navigating Commands

(which may vary depending on your laptop's age and default settings)

On your PC

- 1. To page down, press the down arrow on your keyboard
- 2. Optional: Click **reader** or **full screen mode** on your PDF software
- 3. To go to the document **top or bottom**, press **FN** and tap **left** or **right arrow**

On your Mac

- 1. **Download** rather than **Preview** the **Mac** version.
- Click View/Hide Side Bar/Two Pages/Enter Full Screen (depending on your browser commands)
- 3. To page down, press the down arrow on your keyboard
- 4. To go to the document **top or bottom**, press **FN** and tap **left** or **right arrow**

For questions or assistance, email Stephen Wilbers at <u>wilbe004@umn.edu</u>.

"Poetry was likely song at first, before it was written down."

- Heid E. Erdrich*

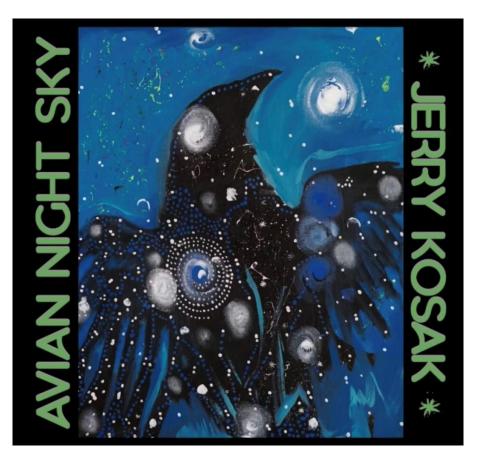
*Two-time Minnesota Book Award winner and 2023 poetry chair for the National Book Awards, **Heid E. Erdrich** was appointed Minneapolis's first Poet Laureate in December 2023. She views her appointment as an opportunity to remind people that poetry is everywhere – in songs and in prayers, in "language that moves people" by community members and by "people who use words in their visual art."

Source: "In song, prayer, first Mpls. poet laureate hopes to move city," by Chris Hewitt (Minneapolis Star Tribune, December 20, 2023)

Paintings are from <u>MaryBeth Garrigan</u> & <u>Petra Johnita Lommen's</u> Avian Night Sky Series. Poems by <u>Stephen Wilbers</u> were inspired by and written in response to these paintings, with the exception of "Hello to Summer: A Poem in Two Parts," which was inspired by the dark starry sky on a moonless summer night.

Avian Night Sky Exhibition Stories of Mystical Migrations

Documenting mystical migrations through the awe-inspiring vistas of the night sky, this exhibition brings together **four artists** who contribute their unique perspectives, all inspired by the magic of dark skies as interpreted in the paintings of **Petra Johnita Lommen** and **MaryBeth Garrigan**, the music of **Jerry Kosak**, and the poetry of **Stephen Wilbers**.



Jerry Kosak's new album was released March 21.

"I created music inspired by the paintings. Some of the songs are perhaps more representational than others, depending where my musical freedom led me and also where the listener's mind takes them."

All music was composed, arranged, recorded, and mixed by Jerry Kosak, and all instruments were performed by Jerry Kosak.

Listen to and purchase Jerry Kosak's new digital album. https:/jerrykosak.bandcamp.com/album/avian-night-sky



Avian Night Sky Exhibition



Away But Never Gone: A Love Poem

for Debbie after <u>The Wailin' Jennys' song</u>

Winter comes on. A lifetime goes by.

Reflections on still water below a dark shimmering sky.

Your laugh in the crunching leaves, stars spinning and twirling their limbs.

The blood moon holds me in its spell as it moans its low sweet song.

To see the earth move along its way, to perch on the wings of a hawk, to catch one last leaf as it zigs zagging to the ground . . . to be in love with you.

> Listen to <u>"Away but Never Gone by The Wailin' Jennys."</u> https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=W4D4r22HDMM





A Lunar Eclipse for MaryBird painting by MaryBeth Garrigan & Petra Johnita Lommen

Alphabet of the Trees

for MaryBeth & Petra after <u>William Carlos Williams' "The Botticellian Trees"</u>

On a cool autumn day turned dark starry night the great gray watches us and we watch it, one of us fading to the other, the other shining bright as the newborn sun.

It was then that one hungry owl, silent as the stars, swooped down on

one unlucky squirrel

who failed to spot those talons, who missed seeing those two descending arcs of white.

It was then that letters hidden in the alphabet of the trees, arising with the death of the brown muffling leaves, spelled out the living beauty of winter's cold, and there arranged in piercing trinity, those eyes, watching, waiting, unbelieving, commanding us to stop, think, move, or die, to listen to their song of humankind's unkindness,

to understand, to read with naked eye, the story of our quick desire.

Now find one dark reproachful eye beneath a crossing bar of swollen limbs, hidden yet illumined behind those gray letters. Look, they say. And sing with us our winter song.



Whispers of the North painting by MaryBeth Garrigan & Petra Johnita Lommen

There Is No Greater Joy than Dry Leaves Pricking Your Ankles

for Eddy and Kim after Gertrude Stein and Mary Oliver

I wasn't there as I watched my 44-year-old baby boy perched high in a tree waiting for a guileless deer to wander by.

Which raises the question of how I got there and whether there is a there there and if there is how did there get there?

My big strapping son there wouldn't like me referring to him as my baby boy perched there in his tree with his quivered arrows, his quivering bow drawn taut and then then . . . ping and a thud and a leap and a red spotted trail washed clean and pure by misty autumn rain

until there was no trace of life or death, no end there nor here between father and son mother and daughter in our brief time

on this, our one wild and precious planet Earth.

Then rake in hand I realized there is no greater joy than dry leaves pricking your ankles through wool socks and stabbing your wrists through woven gloves, bright stars above, yellow sun below, an eagle soaring like my mind, then landing far away, dreaming of my baby boy, right there there in the woods.



How Spirit Eagle Gave Night Eagle Light by MaryBeth Garrigan & Petra Johnita Lommen



Moon Watching Night Owl

in appreciation of <u>Paul Bogard</u>, author of <u>The End of Night</u>, and <u>Todd Burlet</u>, president of <u>Starry Skies North</u>

I see you watching me as you see me watching you on a cool autumn day turned bright moonlit night.

You with your reflected beauty, your power to tow the tides, to move the women of the world to dance in wondrous harmony as they flow into the night.

My power rivals yours, not reflected but connected with all living life, for I can hunt by starlight and have no need of your bright and garish light, for I possess wisdom, I foretell transformation while you are bound by fixed trajectory.

For I hold the power of countless stars and moons and galaxies within me, while you, you with your haunting beauty, revolve around my home, but I, keeper of the alphabet of the trees, I draw their eyes, I warn them of their thoughtless treachery, I invite them to listen and to sing this winter song.

They're watching and listening now, if only for this one moment.

Pray they don't turn away.



Noctua painting by <u>MaryBeth Garrigan</u> & <u>Petra Johnita Lommen</u>

These Woods for Me Once Full of Song

for <u>Matilda McCoy</u>, the Whistling Swan, in the Irish myth named Fionnghuala or Fionnuala, the beautiful and free-spirited daughter of Lir who along with her three brothers was condemned by her jealous stepmother Aoife to live 300 years as a swan

These woods for me once full of song still echo with your laughter.

Beneath that big red pine, our backs on needled earth, your tiny hand in mine (though not so tiny even then), we watched those swirling branches touch the sky.

Do you remember that starry night long ago when the whistling swans flew into your dreams?

Do you remember the melody and those words you sang as you turned to chase the moon into that starry starry sky, unseeable yet not unseen, uncaring where others may be going, pinned in place by the brilliance of your mind but cheered on by one moonstruck flower crying you're free you're free, great whistling spirit, follow your destiny, though your brothers' hearts are beating one two three as they call out to you in fright, I say, my gentle daughter, be true to yourself.

Do you remember the melody? Will you sing those words to me now?

Tell me, my little one, daughter of Lir, where are you bound? Tell me, where are you going, and what next for you?

Will you come teeter-totter on this log and play in your fine stick fort?

These woods like you have grown, I know, I know, that's the way it's meant to be.

And what next for me?

A few more years among these trees before I sleep, I pray, more dreams to come before I'm home and life goes on and on



Cygnus Homage to the <u>Children of Lir</u> painting by <u>MaryBeth Garrigan</u> & <u>Petra Johnita Lommen</u>

Have Faith in the Blues of the New Moon Rise

in appreciation of <u>Travis Novitsky and Annette S. Lee's Spirits Dancing</u> after <u>"Terry Tempest Williams' "Believe" in *The Wings of Herons* (Constellation Project)</u>

come perch next to me in this last dying tree tuck your head in my soft nest of down

come look at these stars to find out who you are see the smile on the curve of my beak

hear the clack . . . clack clacking of spirits dancing the beat of my raging heart

now awake from your greed and your easy sleep feel the heat of your fiery new home

> come perch next to me in this last dying tree tuck your head in my soft nest of down

now look two-eyed at the spark-studded sky face the facts of what you have done

go deeper than hope to transformative change and move at the speed of light

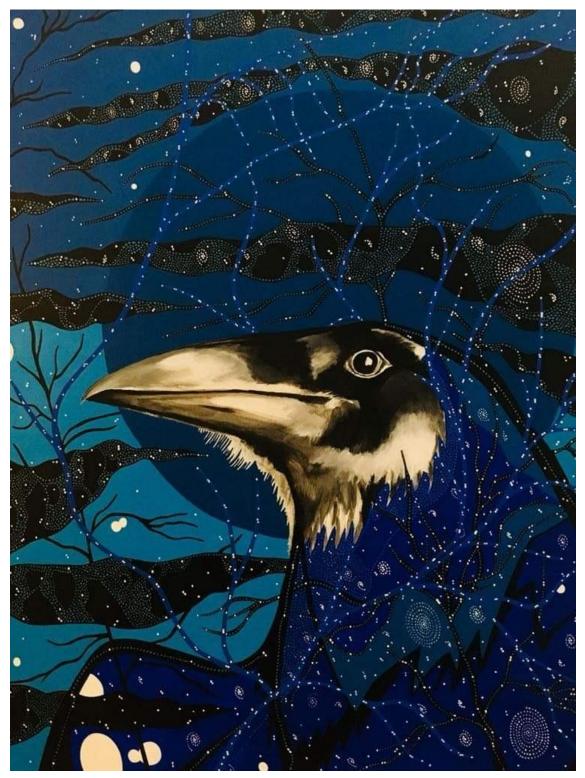
open your soul to the blues of creation have faith in the new moon rise

> come perch next to me in this last dying tree tuck your head in my soft nest of down

come back to your mother who loves and forgives you and wrap your small ones in snow

feel the blast furnace breeze like a broken dream watch my black wings burst into flames

then reach for the cool of these last bright stars and cherish all that remains



"Mysteries of the New Moon" painting by <u>MaryBeth Garrigan</u> & <u>Petra Johnita Lommen</u>

> Read <u>"Terry Tempest Williams' "Believe" in The Wings of Herons.</u> https://issuu.com/rfa-publications/docs/the wings of herons for issuu



Sandhill Cranes Looking This Way and That

for Lachlan Lee after <u>Tom Paxton's "Jennifer's Rabbit"</u>

Little Lachlan Lee was sleeping in his little grassy bed when four long-legged cranes alighted on his sleepy head.

Then two two-eyed raccoons descended from their sappy tree to leave their cozy home and go exploring by the sea, and so did Lachlan Lee.

The cranes ran through the grasses up and down the sandy hills. They ran on sticky legs in search of sticky wicky thrills.

The more they roamed and ranged, the sorer they became. So Little Lachlan Lee atop his favorite leggy crane, said fly or you'll go lame.

They shot up through the clouds to the moon so very high. They flew so fast and far they knocked the stars down from the sky.

The mountains wrapped them snug and tight in comfy cold moonbeams, and then they stuck their sticky legs in sticky milky streams, awash in Lachy's dreams.

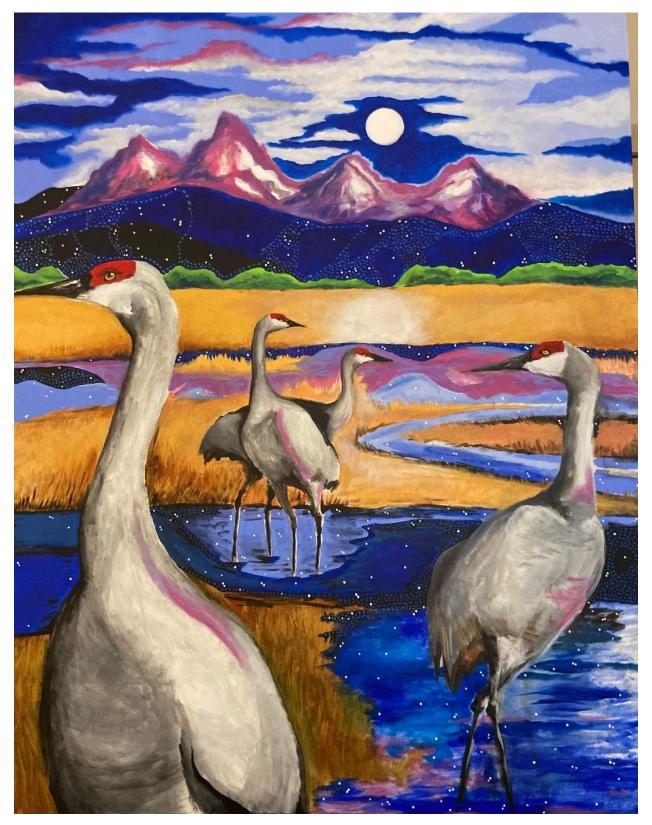
By the sandy hilly hills where the wild cranes like to play, an eager beaver paddled from a beamy moonlit bay.

Said the beaver, Lachlan Lee, who left these stars here on the ground? And how many are there scattered all around?

How about we count and see? said Little Lachlan Lee.

Listen to <u>Tom Paxton's "Jennifer's Rabbit."</u> https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4gVqlzRuaMA





"Over the Tetons" painting by <u>MaryBeth Garrigan</u> & <u>Petra Johnita Lommen</u>

Choices

for Harriet the Eagle in appreciation of <u>Sam Zimmerman's Following My Spirit Home</u>

Which is better?

To see the night sky, or to imagine darkness?

To feel the starlit heavens move, or to think ourselves at the center?

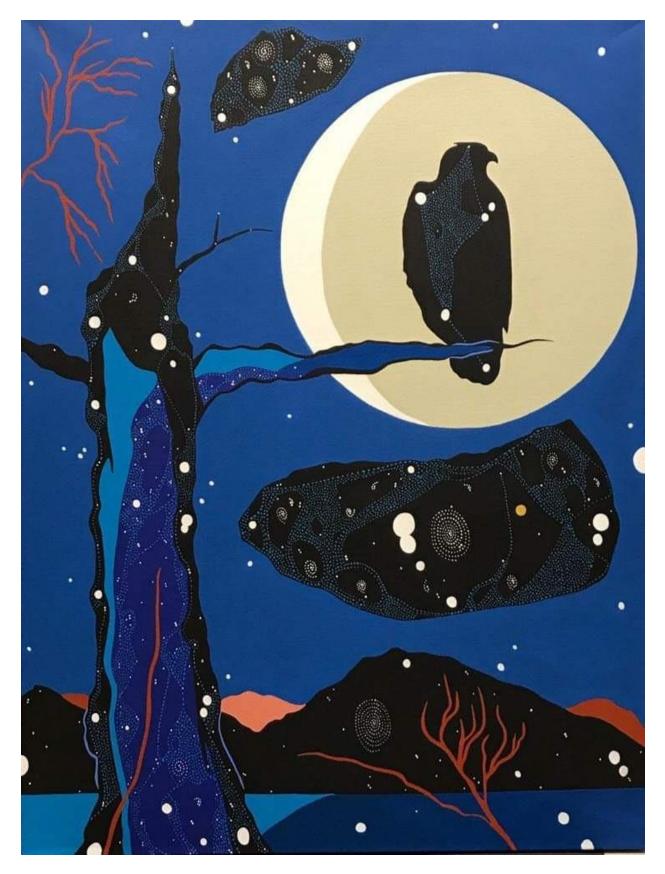
To connect with the mysteries of creation, or to find we can no longer look back in time?

To see the stars in all their brilliance, or to remember how they once lit the sky?

To care about our living planet, or to commemorate our insularity?

To touch our mother, or to long for her caress?

To honor, or to disregard?



Mystical Realm of the First Eagle Huntress painting by <u>MaryBeth Garrigan</u> & <u>Petra Johnita Lommen</u>

Missing You

gone away but never and golden rings snowflakes on painted wings still falling spirits rising like stars away and ever gone spirits rising on painted wings and golden rings away but never gone snowflakes still falling like stars away and ever gone ever gone away and like stars still falling snowflakes away but never gone and golden rings on painted wings spirits rising spirits rising on painted wings and golden rings away but never gone snowflakes still falling like stars away and ever gone



Corvus Minor painting by MaryBeth Garrigan & Petra Johnita Lommen

Not Every Eagle Has a Cowlick (and Not Every Bird Has a Center)

A found poem by MaryBeth Garrigan, Stephen Wilbers, and the other Stephen

She is very beautiful. Is there any chance that she's gonna go for my eyeballs? Not unless you flop around like a fish, Stephen. What if I rub some salmon on my eyelids? She has no sense of smell, Stephen. Well, then, we're even. I don't see color. Now, her eating chicken, that's semi-cannibalism, isn't it? Well, she's eating a bird, that's right. Yeah, that would be like me eating Jon Stewart. But, uh, [facing camera] think about it, Jon. Just think about it for the ratings, Jon!

Watch the live Harriet the Eagle and the lively MaryBeth Garrigan on the Stephen Colbert Show.



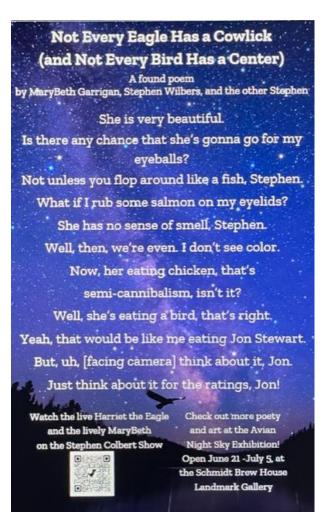
https://www.cc.com/video/0y4kih/the-colbert-report-marybeth-garrigan



Harriet the Eagle, with constellation Aquila painting by MaryBeth Garrigan & Petra Johnita Lommen

Donated to the <u>National Eagle Center</u> in Wabasha, Minnesota, by founding Executive Director MaryBeth Garrigan





Visit our companion exhibit at the National Eagle Center!



https://www.nationaleaglecenter.org

Want to support Harriet's legacy and other Bald Eagles?

Become a National Eagle Center member!



https://www.nationaleaglecenter.org/donate/

Remembering Harriet: Bald Eagle Ambassador

Harriet was the original National Eagle Center Ambassador and probably the most wellknown of all the Eagle Ambassadors, past or present. Known for her very calm nature and demeanor, she was a tremendous educator and one-of-a-kind ambassador for her species. Harriet was hatched in a nest in northern Wisconsin in 1981. We know this because she was given a leg band in the nest by DNR officer Ron Eckstrand. As fate would have it, 17 years later in 1998 when Harriet was unfortunately struck by a vehicle and suffered a severe wing injury, it was Eckstrand who rescued her! Following treatment at the University of Minnesota Raptor Center, which resulted in the partial amputation of her left wing, Harriet made her way to the newly opened Eagle Center on Main Street in Wabasha. Unable to fly and survive in the wild, she would spend the rest of her life educating the public and touching the lives of thousands upon thousands of people.

Among her many adventures as an Ambassador, Harriet traveled the country appearing on network talk shows like the Colbert Report and visiting the work crews at Ground Zero in New York City during reconstruction following the 9/11 terrorist attacks. She was especially well-known for her work with wounded US military personnel. Harriet was a regular visitor to the VA Hospital in St. Paul, Minnesota, and her work was honored when she was selected to appear on the Minnesota "Support Our Troops" license plate, on which she still appears today.

Remarkably, Harriet lived two distinct lives: 17 years as an eagle in the wild and 18 more as an educator in the care of humans. She passed away in 2016 at the ripe old age of 35 years (normal lifespan in the wild is 20-25 years) and her legacy continues to live on today, both immortalized on the "Support Our Troops" license plate and in the fond memories of the countless people who met and worked with her through the years.







Harriet is recognized by her signature tuft of feathers on the top of her head, the result of a vehicle collision she suffered in 1998.

Hello to Summer: A Poem in Two Parts

for Kate and Markus first published by the Friends of the Eau Claire Lakes Area (FOECLA)

Crunching Down a Dark Gravel Lane on a Moonless Summer Night

Here's how you walk down a dark gravel lane on a moonless summer night without bumping into a tree.

It's easy.

You listen to the gravel crunching beneath your feet, and when it stops you know you're in trouble.

If there's any light in the sky (a glimmer will do), you look up to where those trees don't touch, and step by step you climb those crunchy stairs to the stars.

You'll be just fine, you tell yourself. Don't worry, you tell yourself. It's a painless journey. No need for fear.

No need to give any thought to other places you could be going or where you might have gone wrong.

Just pay attention. Be present. Listen.

Without Conscious Thought

Walking down a forked gravel lane, I took the one more traveled.

It wasn't my fault. I was doing everything right.

I was alive to my present surroundings, living my midsummer night's dream, the air cool and damp, the fireflies twinking on and off, on and off.

But listen. Here's the thing.

Fireflies don't guide you so much as mystify and delight you and maybe inspire you.

And that's when it happened on that moonless summer night.

Without choice of will, nor conscious thought, my hand darted to that beast in my pocket, its glaring screen blueminated my eyes, my feet went yon rather than hither – went that way instead of this – and the ground went soft and the crunching stopped.

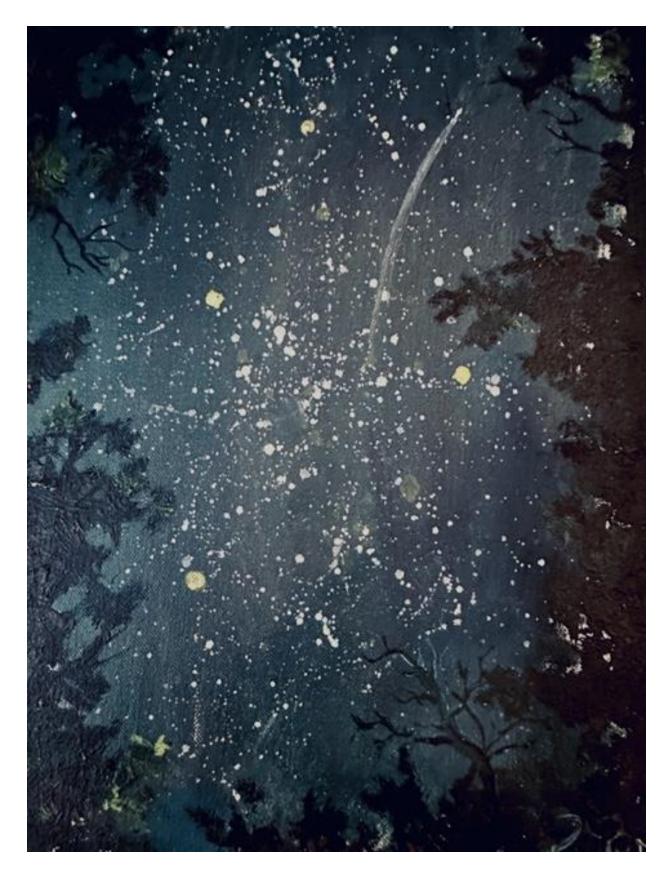
It was so quiet.

And in that encircling silence with no whisper or trace of breeze,

I found myself transfixed, the spinning world at my fingertips, and never so lost.

Then just before it was forever too late – the cosmos forever dimmed – I confined that beast to its lair.

And with fireflies flashing about me, the Earth exposing her milky way, I climbed that gravel stairway into the starry night sky.



Midnight Walk painted by <u>MaryBeth Garrigan</u> right after high school, on returning from a midnight walk in Preacher's Grove when working as a Bell Museum interpreter for the University of Minnesota's Itasca Biological Station

Looking and Listening More Closely

Exploring the paintings and poems of the Avian Night Sky Series

by Stephen Wilbers (wilbe004@umn.edu)

Can you read the alphabet of the trees when leaves begin to fall?

Do you see the yellow trinity descending on its prey?

Have you found that one dark reproachful eye beneath a crossing bar of swollen limbs?

Can you find one moonstruck flower sending love to a star-fixed child?

Do you feel the passion of umbral heat when the blood moon begins to glow?

Do crunching leaves laugh for you when the blue moon rises in your heart?

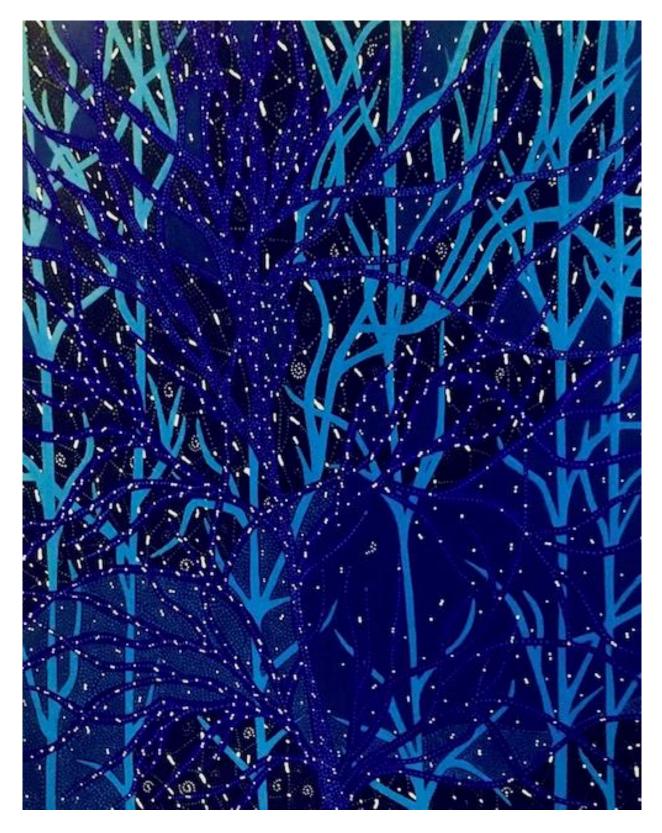
Are you waltzing with the troopers while counting one two three?

Can you hear the 1 2 3 4 beat in the blues of creation?

Did you count all the stars that fell down to the ground?

If people and birds can dance, why can't words?

Can you hear the wail of winter's song? Do tell, are you listening now?



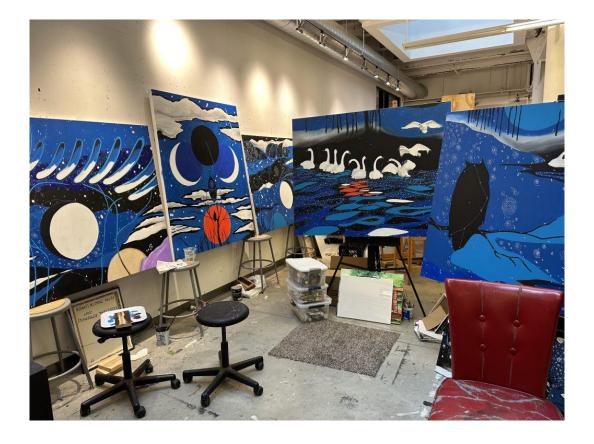
Jingle Dress Starscape painted by <u>Petra Johnita Lommen</u> while working as the Science Museum of Minnesota Paleontology Hall floor supervisor, after coming upon a group of Ojibwe dancers whose sound led Petra to see the relation between sound and stars in a new way

Avian Night Sky Exhibition Six-panel "Altar" in creation

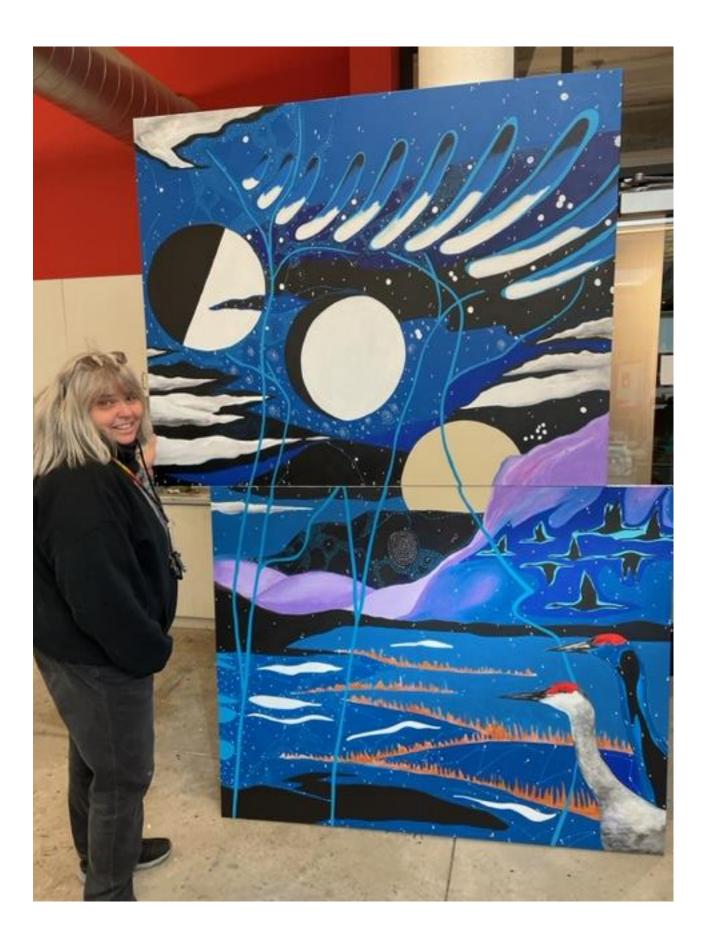


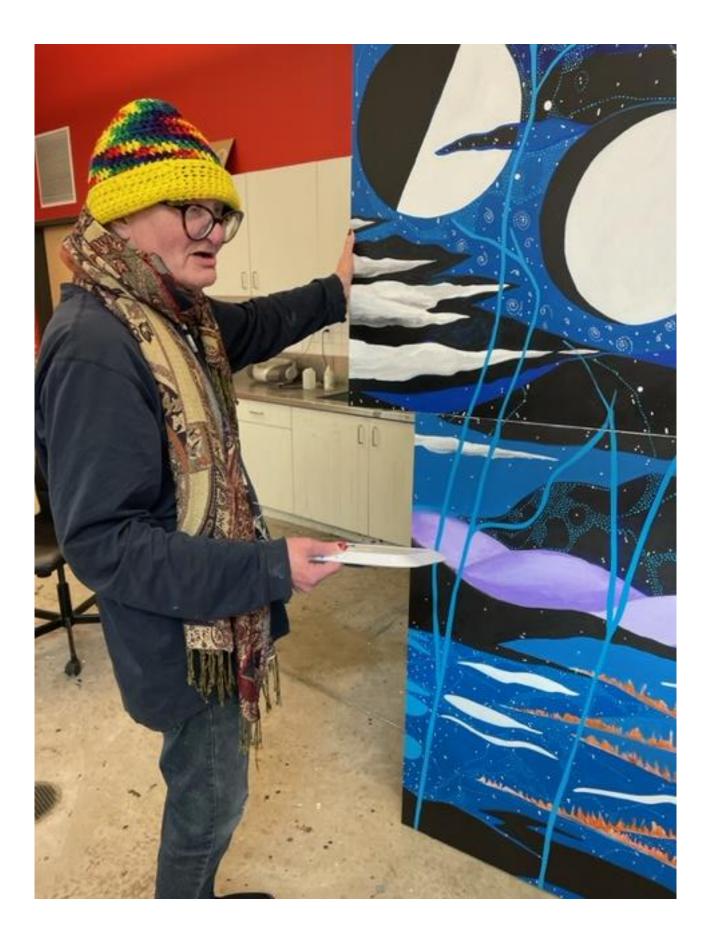


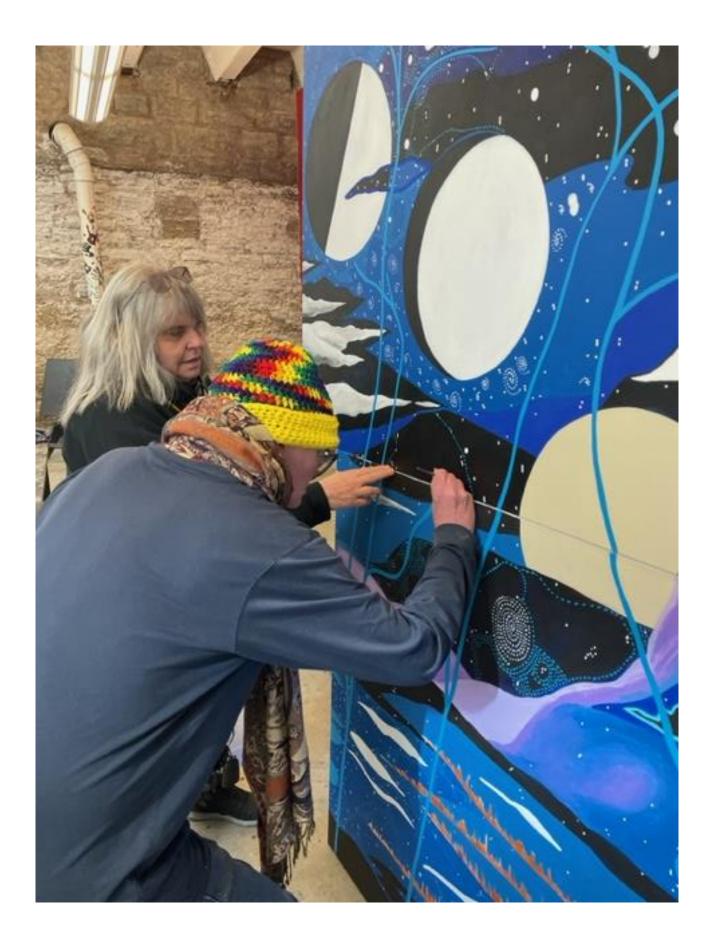
Avian Night Sky Exhibition Six-panel "Altar" in creation













Watch a 30-second video of MaryBeth and Petra collaborating as they add a finishing touch to these panels.

<u>http://www.uglydaisy.com/video-of-avian-</u> <u>night-sky-artists-petra-johnita-lommen-</u> <u>marybeth-garrigan/</u>



March 6, 2024, Exhibit

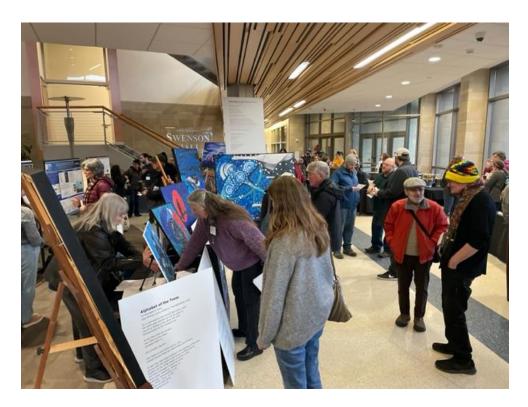
St. Louis River Summit: Braiding Visions for an Enduring Future





March 6, 2024, Exhibit

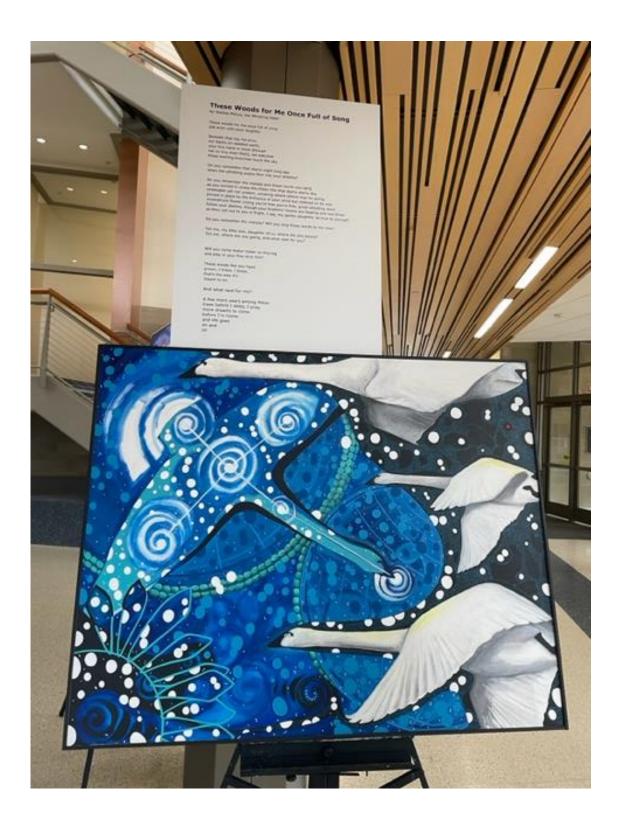
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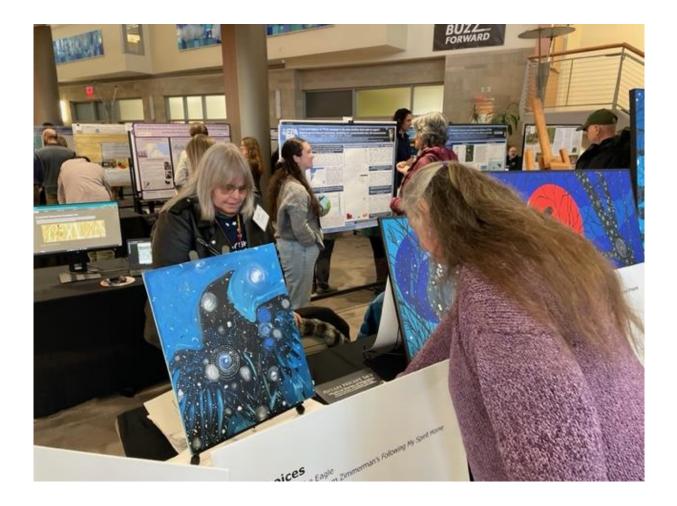


















Watch Northern Skies, Starry Nights

A documentary by PBS North, co-produced with Hamline University An experience that will transform your appreciation of the North Country's spectacular starry skies!



https://www.pbs.org/video/northern-nights-starry-skies-gr9gzw/

Featuring photographer **Travis Novitsky,** Grand Portage Band of Lake Superior Chippewa, this PBS documentary is billed as "a visually stunning exploration of the heavens as seen from **Voyageurs National Park,** the **Boundary Waters Canoe Area Wilderness,** and **Quetico Provincial Park** – together comprising the world's largest designated Dark Sky sanctuary.

"Ojibwe artist and scholar **Carl Gawboy** shares Indigenous star knowledge complemented by Indigenous and cultural astronomers **Jim Rock** and **Jessica Heim** and astronomer **Bob King.** Learn how artificial light is impacting our world from author **Paul Bogard** and about the movement to reduce the harmful human health and environmental effects of light pollution from Starry Skies North founders **Cynthia Lapp** and **Randy Larson** and bird expert **Laura Erickson**.



Help keep our dark skies dark! Please visit Starry Skies North and donate.





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Avian Night Sky Exhibition

Stories of Mystical Migration

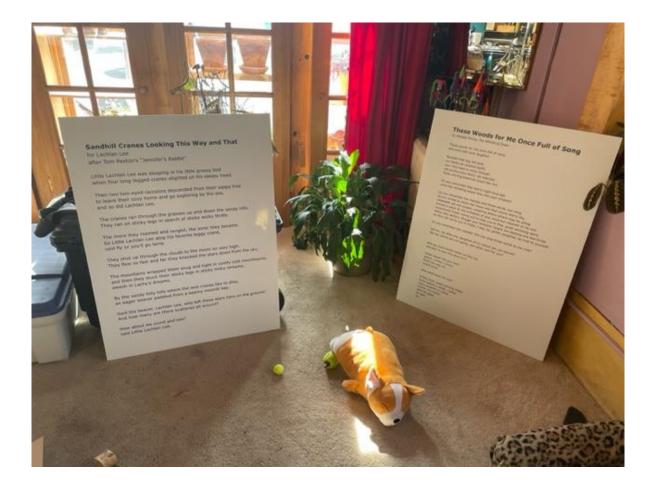
at the Schmidt Artist Lofts

900 W. Seventh St., St. Paul, MN 55102 June 21-July 5, 2024

Grand Opening 4-8 p.m., June 21







A Winter Song of Love for the Children of Mother Earth

(for family members only)

For Matilda, the Whistling Song

first flower of spring your yellow love is dripping from my heart

For Little Lachlan Lee

you're the rock beneath my feet but please don't throw those love balls quite so hard "Poetry was likely song at first, before it was written down."

- Heid E. Erdrich*



*Fellow writer and family member <u>Louise Erdrich</u> lauded Heid as a "brilliant choice" to be the city's premiere voice in verse.

"Heid is a joyous, cerebral, funny, generous phenomenon as a poet. She is a Twin City treasure — a devoted teacher with broad sympathies and an example of artistic excellence," wrote the Pulitzer Prize winner in an email.

"She also happens to be a family gem, my particular hero and the most loving sister imaginable."

Source: "In song, prayer, first Mpls. poet laureate hopes to move city," by Chris Hewitt (Minneapolis Star Tribune, December 20, 2023)

For Further Listening, Reading, & Viewing

See more paintings by MaryBeth Garrigan & Petra Johnita Lommen

http://www.uglydaisy.com/ http://www.uglydaisy.com/avain-night-sky-stories-of-mystical-migrations/





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Listen to Tom Paxton's "Jennifer's Rabbit."

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4gVqlzRuaMA



Watch the April 5, 2023, public meeting on the Lower Sioux land return.

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0gHX-Mh-yIQ



For Further Listening, Reading, & Viewing

Watch the live Harriet the Eagle and the lively MaryBeth on the Stephen Colbert Show.

https://www.cc.com/video/0y4kih/the-colbert-report-marybeth-garrigan



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A PBS/Hamline University documentary that will transform your appreciation of the North Country's spectacular starry skies! <u>https://www.pbs.org/video/northern-nights-starry-skies-gr9gzw/</u>



Help keep our dark skies dark!

https://starryskiesnorth.org/donate





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<u>http://www.uglydaisy.com/video-of-avian-night-sky-artists-petra-johnita-lommen-</u> marybeth-garrigan/



Get to know Minneapolis' first Poet Laureate, <u>Heid E. Erdrich.</u>

https://heiderdrich.com/

